expressed interest in taking coal blocks to sustain power generation. NTPC, DVC and TVNL have also sought further blocks.

Fire in coal mines of Raniganj and Jharia

†4493. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the coal mines of Raniganj and Jharia region are continuously in the grip of fire for the last several years;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether Government have made any assessment of the quantum and value of coal destroyed due to this fire; and

(d) if so, the quantum and value of coal burnt in a year in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) In Jharia coalfield, in the year 1971, 17.32 Sq. Km. area was under fire which now stands at 8.90 Sq. Km. only. 40 coal mines of Bharat Coking Coal Limited in Jharia coalfield are affected by fire. In Raniganj coalfield, the fire is in a very limited area and is under control.

(c) and (d) Central Mine Planning & Design Institute had earlier estimated that about 37 million tonnes of coal was lost due to mine fire in Jharia coalfields. However, it is difficult to exactly estimate the quantity of coal getting destroyed by mine fire in a year. There are no laid down norms to calculate the quantum of coal being destroyed by mine fire in in-situ condition.

Demand-supply gap of Coal

†4494. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to reduce the demand-supply gap of coal, CIL propose to speed up coal production with investment of around Rs. 21,000 crores to meet the revised target;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.